

Top Secret



DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

Intelligence Memorandum

RECENT ACTIVITIES IN NORTH VIETNAM SOUTH OF THE 20TH
PARALLEL (30 SEPTEMBER-6 OCTOBER 1968)

Top Secret

8 October 1968



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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
8 October 1968

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

Recent Activities in North Vietnam
South of the 20th Parallel
(30 September-6 October 1968)

Summary

North Vietnam has continued to improve its logistical capabilities in the Panhandle and has begun the reconstruction of an industrial facility below the 20th Parallel for the first time since the bombing restrictions were adopted. Reconstruction of the Thanh Hoa powerplant is apparently under way [redacted]

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[redacted] Repairs to railroad bridges now permit the employment of full-size rail cars between the 19th and 20th Parallels for the first time since the bombings began. Truck activity [redacted] increased by about one-third from the unusually low level reported the previous week, but poor weather continued to hamper air observations, and total sightings remained well below the levels noted since 1 April. Watercraft sightings [redacted]

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[redacted] declined slightly, but remained well above averages compiled since the bombing halt.

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Note: This memorandum was produced solely by CIA. It was prepared jointly by the Office of Economic Research and the Office of Current Intelligence and was coordinated with the Director's Special Assistant for Vietnamese Affairs.

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Railroads

1. The North Vietnamese are increasing their rail transport capability south of the 20th Parallel [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] the Hanoi-Vinh rail line. Large meter-gauge boxcars were observed at the Cho Giat/Tho Trang rail transshipment area, indicating that the North Vietnamese have reconstructed bridges on the rail line south of Thanh Hoa to such an extent that normal rail operations are again possible between the 19th and 20th Parallels. Prior to mid-September, only small meter-gauge tramcars could be used on the line south of Thanh Hoa because of the weight-bearing limits of reconstructed bridges. In addition, 38 rail cars not previously observed south of the 19th Parallel were detected in the Vinh railroad yard, the first indications of through rail movement south of the 19th Parallel since early June.

Truck Traffic

2. [REDACTED] an increase of one-third in truck sightings and a 70-percent increase in trucks destroyed or damaged, compared with the previous week. Nevertheless, truck sightings remained substantially below the weekly average noted since 1 April as they have for the past several weeks. No convoys or large concentrations of trucks were reported. Truck sightings along coastal Route 1A south of Vinh, however, were considerably greater for the second week in a row than that observed on this route in the past several months. Improved weather conditions during the latter part of the week may account for much of the increase in truck sightings this week.

	<u>Trucks</u>			
	<u>Sighted</u>	<u>De- stroyed</u>	<u>Damaged</u>	<u>Effective Losses a/</u>
This week b/ (30 Sep- 6 Oct)	338	110	37	92
Last week (23-29 Sep)	253	62	25	53
Weekly average (since 1 Apr)	641	118	73	107

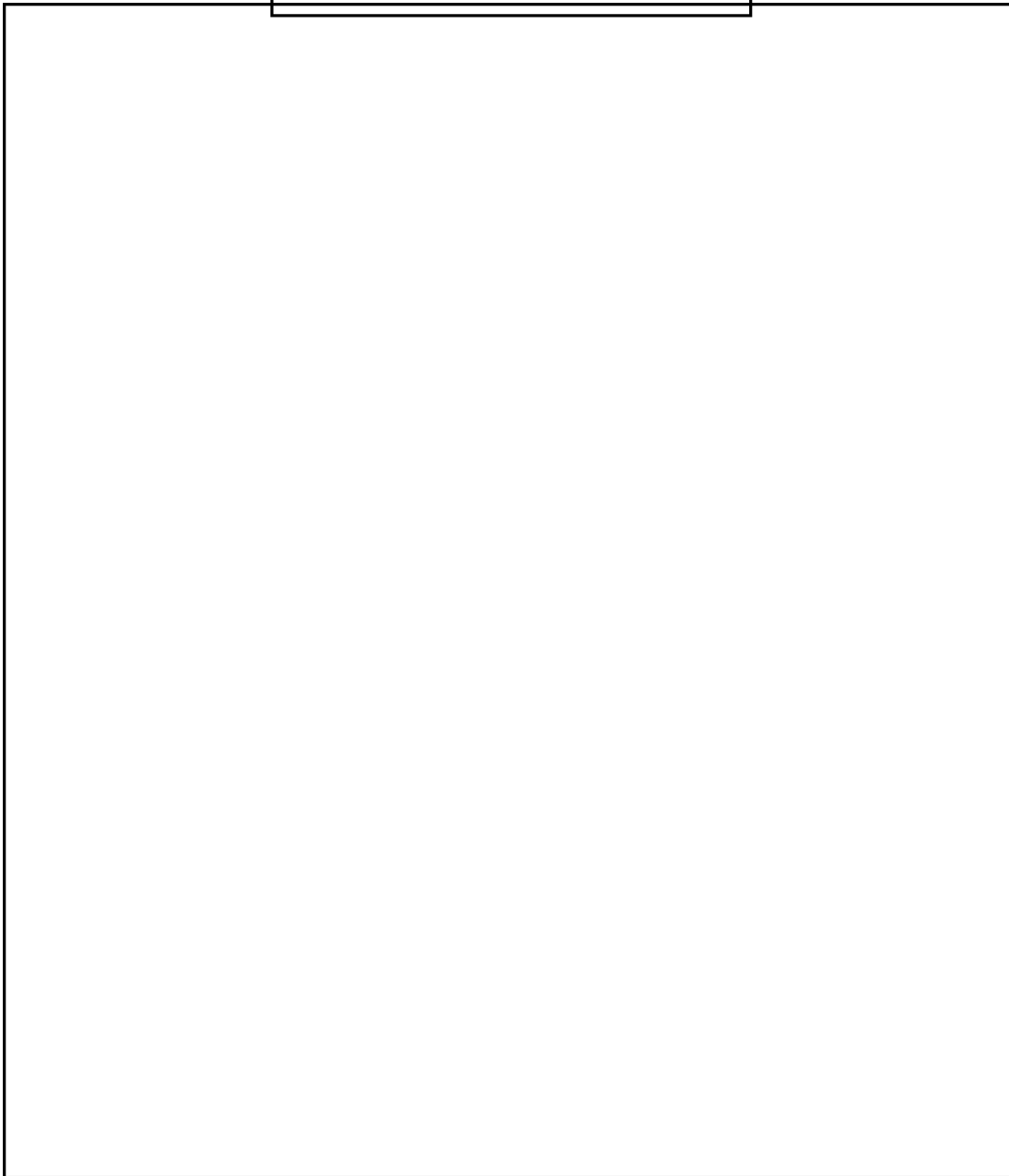
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b. Preliminary data.

Watercraft

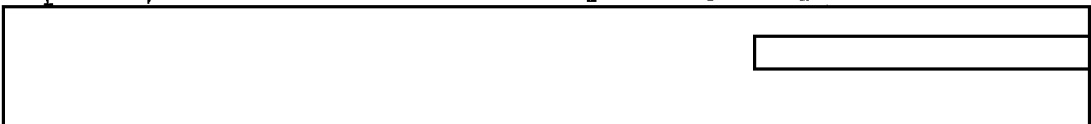
3. Watercraft sightings south of the 19th Parallel decreased slightly this week but remained well above the average weekly sightings noted since 1 April 1968. Watercraft activity was centered on the Song Ca, Kenh Gai, and Song Ngan Sau waterways around Vinh and on the Kenh Me and Song Dau waterways. Two hundred and twenty-five watercraft were observed on 30 September along a five-mile section of Song Dau that runs from the coast to the Dong Ben transshipment area; Dong Ben is located about one mile south of Cho Giat, a large rail-to-road transshipment area, and near Route 1A, the main north-south highway route.

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Industry

5. The first major industrial reconstruction undertaken by North Vietnam south of the 20th Parallel has been detected at the Thanh Hoa power-plant, which had been heavily damaged by US bomb-



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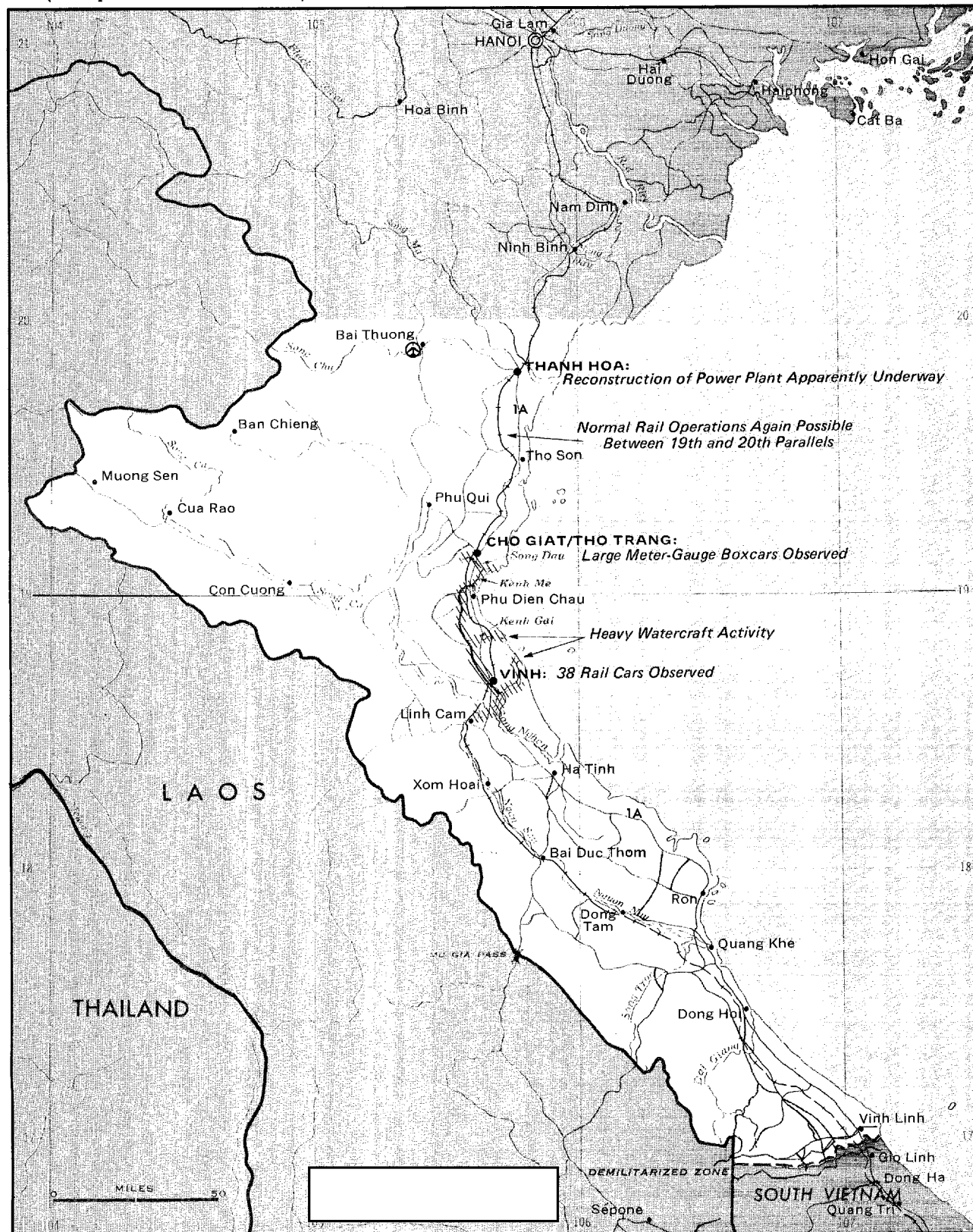
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] It is estimated that the
plant could be in service by mid-1969. The Thanh
Hoa facility will account for about 3 percent of
North Vietnam's pre-bombing generating capacity,
approximately equal to the generating capacity of
the original plant, and will serve a small power
system in the vicinity of Thanh Hoa. [REDACTED]

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